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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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DESP. NO.

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

FROM Amcongen, Lagos, Nigeria

DATE December 3, 1955

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	REC'D 12/19	INFO RM/R-2 OLI-6 EUR-5 IO-4 P-1 USON-1 VO-1 RRP-4
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SUBJECT: Bi-Weekly Review, November 16-30, 1955 TR-3 FRB-2 FAR-2 XMB-3 LAB-4 NEWS-1 INF-7

DEC 30 AM

NEA SAGE CENTER

POLITICAL

U.N. Visiting Mission (UNCLASSIFIED)

The four-man mission from the United Nations Trusteeship Council has completed its tour of the British Cameroons and is expected to arrive in Lagos on December 5. After ten days in the Southern Cameroons, during which the mission visited and received petitions at Bamenda, Kumba, Buea, Victoria, and Tiko, the group flew to Yola, Northern Cameroons, on November 27. At Yola the Mission was met by Haba HABIB, Northern Regional Minister for Northern Cameroons Affairs.

Considerable press play was given to the reputed statement of Mr. Max DORSINVILLE, mission chairman, that the question of unifying the French and British Cameroons is not difficult. Mr. Dorsinville went on to say that the Trusteeship Council had discussed unification question for many years and would do its best to solve the important issue.

The "Daily Times" reported that 500 French soldiers have been moved to Santa, a French customs post 12 miles from Bamenda. It stated that the troops had been posted to arrest the "hundreds of refugees now in Bamenda, who in collaboration with Assemblyman John M. FONCHA's Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) had petitioned the mission for a unification of the British and French Cameroons and the protection and guarantee of freedom of speech and association for all French Cameroonians, some of whom had been prosecuted and intimidated by the French authorities".

In a petition signed by Paul M. KALE, the Kameroun Peoples Party (KPP) has requested that the UN or the Administering Authority make a £20 million grant available to the Southern Cameroons Trust Territory. The petition also requested full regional status for the Cameroons, unification between the French and British sectors, universal adult sufferage, and the installation of a legislative House of Chiefs.

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COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

According to a Government source in Lagos, who visited the mission in the French Cameroons, the French authorities were successful in keeping the members of the outlawed parties from contacting the mission while in French territory. In one case, where a petition was received which expressed the UPC "line", the French authorities informed the mission that the sender would not be allowed to appear before the mission since he was patently an agent of the UPC although not a registered party member. Mission members reportedly were none too happy with the French concentration upon official receptions and protocol which severely curtailed the time available to hear petitioners or inspect the territory.

So far as the Consulate General knows, none of the French political "refugees" now in Bamenda has applied for an American visa in response to the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee's invitation to appear before it in New York.

Split in Middle Belt Party (UNCLASSIFIED)

The annual convention of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) party held at Ilorin has voted to expel its President General, Pastor David LOT, a member of the Northern House of Assembly, its Assistant General Secretary, Patrick DOKOTRI, who is also a member of the Northern House, and its Principal Organizing Secretary, Alhaji Abuku IDOKO. The three officers were dismissed for "disloyalty", the specific reason being the alliance which Lot and Dokotri had formed with the NPC. During the convention, the delegates nullified the alliance with the NPC but declared their readiness to support any major political party which advocated democratizing the Northern Region's electoral system. The convention appointed a committee to prepare the party's policy toward constitutional changes for presentation at the 1956 Constitutional Convention and passed a resolution urging the creation of a Middle Belt Region.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Lot and Dokdri have been the only representatives of the UMBC in the Northern House at Kaduna. Their decision to ally with the NPC was presumably prompted by NPC pressure at Kaduna and by a rumored offer of a ministerial position if the Middle Belt were drawn into line to preserve a solid northern policy front for the approaching constitutional meeting.

There have been previous rumblings of general dissatisfaction with the Middle Belt representatives, especially by those members who feel that the Middle Belt can gain more by preserving an independent status or forming a loose alliance with the NCNC (see D-40, September 13, 1955).

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McPherson Made U.K. Representative on Trusteeship Council (UNCLASSIFIED)

Sir John MC PHERSON, who retired as Governor General of Nigeria in April, 1955, has been appointed British permanent representative on the UN Trusteeship Council to replace Sir allan BURNS, also a former governor of Nigeria. Sir John will be resident in New York and will represent Britain on the General Assembly's Fourth Committee as well as on the Trusteeship Council.

Appointment of Federal Parliamentary Secretaries (UNCLASSIFIED)

Governor General Sir James ROBERTSON has appointed the following Parliamentary Secretaries to three Federal Ministries: Mallam Usman SARKI, Ministry of Works; Mr. O. BADEMOSI, Ministry of Research and Information, and Mr. Patrick M. DOKOTRI, Ministry of Land, Mines, and Power.

Eastern Bribery Commission (UNCLASSIFIED)

A commission to investigate bribery and corruption in the Eastern Region has been set up by the Eastern Regional Government and is hearing testimony at Onitsha. The commission had not been sitting long before accusations of corruption had been directed at most of the prominent NCNC leaders. Mokugwo OKOYE, former organizing secretary of the NCNC, who was expelled from the party (see D-171, page 1, May 16, 1955), alleged that M. T. MBU, recently appointed Nigerian Federal Commissioner in the United Kingdom, contributed heavily to his party leaders in order to obtain the London post. Mbu is alleged to have given £1,000 to Premier AZIKIWE, Eastern Regional Finance Minister OJIKE, and Federal Ministers MBADIWE and BALOGUN, and Minister of Finance Ojike has been accused of demanding and receiving a 5% kick-back from firms engaged in large construction projects in the Region.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Probably the best that can be hoped from the Bribery Commission is a cessation of the most flagrant instances of financial irregularities among government officials in the Eastern Region. Bribery and [illegible] the Nigerian spoils system are so generally accepted and followed by Eastern officials that pressure undoubtedly will be brought from all levels of the NCNC to discredit the Commission's witnesses and invalidate its reports, if one is in fact forthcoming.

Zik Returns to Nigeria (UNCLASSIFIED)

Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Premier of the Eastern Region, has returned to Nigeria after his three months' trip to Britain and the United States. On his arrival at Lagos, Zik announced that his trip had been a successful one. Declaring that television was a "necessity"

for the East, he said that experts would soon arrive to investigate the establishment of a TV station.

He also announced that experts (nationality not revealed) would arrive in January to investigate the establishment of an automobile factory in the East.

Completion of Western Region's Registration (UNCLASSIFIED)

During the month of November, the Western Region completed the ~~xx~~ registration of voters for next year's election to the Western House. Although complete returns have not yet been compiled, it appears that approximately 1,250,000 of the approximately 3,000,000 eligibles have registered.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

No date has yet been announced for the elections; Action Group leaders are apparently undecided whether to hold it before or after the August constitutional conference.

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ECONOMIC

Japan to Send an Economic Mission to Nigeria (UNCLASSIFIED)

Japan is planning to send an economic mission to Nigeria sometime next year to investigate problems relating to the export of produce from Nigeria to Japan. The mission is in part the result of strong feelings expressed by Nigerian politicians and business men over the extremely high adverse trade balance Nigeria has with Japan.

While Japan imports practically nothing from Nigeria, she floods the country with goods valued at more than £6,000,000 each year. At the other extreme Nigeria's total exports to Japan increased from £1 in 1953 to £2 in 1954 (previously reported).

Increased Livestock Revenue in North (UNCLASSIFIED)

The importance of the livestock industry to the prosperity of Northern Nigeria is measured by the gross annual revenue which reached £16,000,000 in 1954. This was the highest ever achieved. The region exported 281,000 head of cattle and 100,000 goats and sheep to the Western and Eastern regions during this period. These exports were valued at £5,700,000. Internal sales in the region brought a revenue of £7,000,000. Total export of livestock brought a revenue of £6,000,000.

Exports of hides and skins through the port of Lagos for 1954 was valued at £2,238,640 which was £500,000 more than in 1953.

United Nations Trusteeship Council (UNCLASSIFIED)

The United Nations Trusteeship Council which entered the Cameroons on November 18th will arrive in Lagos on December 5th.

Revenue From Customs Department (UNCLASSIFIED)

The Federation of Nigeria will earn an estimated revenue of £38,603,000 by the end of the 1955/56 financial year through the Customs and Excise Department, which is the largest revenue earner in the Federation.

Total income of the Federal Government is expected to reach an all-time record of £53,954,730 of which only £5,648,100 will come from direct taxes.

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LABOR

All Nigeria Trade Union Federation Urges Weekly Wages for Workers
(UNCLASSIFIED)

The third annual congress of the All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF) has passed a resolution urging the government and all private employers to pay weekly wages to workers. The vote, however, was very close (59 for and 56 against). Other motions introduced by the congress were the taking over of bus services by the Federal and local authorities, and a comprehensive system of National health and insurance to be available to all Nigerians.

Mr. Hilton HANNA of the United States Butcher Workmen's Union, who has been in Nigeria for the past six weeks as a guest of ANTUF, addressed the congress of the All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation. Mr. Hanna said that labor could not be separated from the struggle for freedom. In Nigeria as well as other countries, he said, labor had a social responsibility to fulfil in the great function which no other section of the community could perform. In order to qualify for this role the trade unions of Nigeria must be a "strong, efficient, united, intelligent, democratic and well-grounded movement." He added that once labor was in such a position it did not have to depend on the government for favors.

After referring to the days when American negroes were denied the rights of trade union activity, Mr. Hanna said that the American labor movement had now succeeded in achieving trade union rights for both white and black. He added that America was watching the struggle for freedom in Nigeria with keen interest in labor's joint responsibility with the other forces of liberation.

Mr. Hanna presided over the elections to the Executive Committee. There was little change in the officers, but several new faces appeared on the general membership of the Executive Committee, which now has a greater number of members of the Railway Workers Union, Nigeria's largest and strongest trade union.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

The agenda was effectively controlled by Secretary-General NZERIBE, who, as an employee of ANTUF, was not up for election. The most significant feature of the elections was the defeat of L. L. BORHA, a protege of Nzeribe, for the position of First Assistant Secretary. Defeated by NWANA, a member of the Locomotive Drivers Union, Borha was subsequently elected a general member of the Executive Committee.

Arbitrator's Award to Federal Daily-paid Workers (UNCLASSIFIED)

Professor H.G. HANBURY, who has acted as arbitrator in the establishment of wages for the 40,000 daily-paid workers employed by the Federal Government, has announced his findings. His recommendations for the establishment of graduated wage rates, varying from 4 shillings eight pence for Lagos workers to 2 shillings four pence for Federal employees in rural areas of the Northern Region, have been accepted by the Federal Government. Most labor reaction has expressed disappointment at the findings, which were far closer to the Federal Government's proposals than to the demands which labor presented on the Whitley Councils.

The wages will be retroactive to October 1, 1954. In a part of his report Mr. Hanbury recommended that workers be paid bi-weekly rather than monthly, and urged that housing facilities be provided for Lagos workers.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Despite a statement that the award was unsatisfactory by Gogo Chu Nzeribe, Secretary-General of the All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF), it is probable that the workers' representatives will have no alternative but to accept the awards. They will undoubtedly lose further face with the workers since the announced rates differ little from those which the government representatives offered; an increase of three pence for the Lagos area (which constitutes the bulk of workers involved) is contrasted to the Northern Region, where the laborers at work on Federal roads or other projects will receive eight pence less per day than had actually been proposed by Government during the Whitley discussions.

Minefield Labor Dispute (UNCLASSIFIED)

The strike of Northern Mine Workers (see D-61, Nov.2, 1955, p. 1-2) has entered another phase with the completion of negotiations between labor and employer's representatives under the auspices of the Minefield Joint Industrial Council. As a result of the negotiations, the miners, who returned to work in early November, have settled with the employers for most of the wages offered. For the matters still in dispute, principally the date of retroactive pay and a bonus for employees engaged in columbite production, the miners' unions proposed arbitration. The proposal for arbitration, however, has been rejected by the employer's association, which will pay the rates offered during the negotiations, i.e., an approximate 25% increase to general labor and the establishment of artisans' pay at the rates paid by the Northern Regional Government.

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EDUCATION

Expansion of Ibadan College (UNCLASSIFIED)

The council of the University College, Ibadan has announced its decision to establish a department of Economics and Social Studies. Another important decision taken by the Council was to invite Sir David LIDBURY, grading commissioner of the Post and Telegraph Department, to undertake a review of the salary structure of both the administrative and academic staff of the college in the light of the federal government's decision on the Gorsuch recommendations, and to place the intermediate and subordinate staff of the college on appropriate scales to be retroactive from October 1st.

West Spends £2,500,000 on Education (UNCLASSIFIED)

The Government of Western Nigeria spent £2,500,000 on primary school buildings in the region during the first year of the universal primary education scheme. The Department of Education also announced that there were 6,407 primary schools, attended by 811,432 pupils. This figure includes 274,756 girls.

COMMENT (UNCLASSIFIED)

The importance of pr[illegible]y schools in Nigeria is difficult to overstress. While much attention has been centered on the establishment of new universities and the expansion of higher learning, it is an unfortunate fact that all too few of the population have the background education that would enable them to attempt studies at the high school or university level. Fortunately there are signs that the Government is aware of this fact and is attempting to expand education on an elementary level which will form a solid basis for enlarged educational opportunities on a higher level.

Herbert T. Krueger
American Consul

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